

October 12, 2021.

Good morning.

I am so happy to be here with you today, and it's my honor to share this podium on a beautiful autumn morning with my friends and colleagues Chief Don Stephens, Senator Patrick Leahy, Chad Farrell of Encore Renewable Energy, Matt Murphy of Green Backer Capital, Mari McClure of Green Mountain Power, Lieutenant Governor Molly Gray, Middlebury Select board chairman Brian Carpenter, and the College's own Simone Ameer. Senator Leahy, as a professor of religion I already made arrangements with the heavens for this weather—so you didn't need to make the law!

We come together today as responsible stewards of this planet and of this place we are blessed to call home—Ndakinna [in-DAH-keen-AH], the town of Middlebury, the county of Addison, the state of Vermont.

We gather to recognize the generations who came before us in making this very place what it is today, and we do so in service of the generations to come, to ensure that Ndakinna [in-DAH-keen-AH], Middlebury, Addison County, and Vermont remain places where the health of our environment is paramount, and where our people can come together in concert, rather than competition, to maintain a livable community and planet.

When we at Middlebury announced our Energy 2028 initiative three years ago, we laid out an ambitious ten-year plan, pledging that in a decade's time we would sharply reduce our energy consumption as an institution; reduce and then eliminate our investment in fossil fuels; craft a large educational initiative to continue our research and scholarship into climate change—and, in perhaps our boldest promise, rely completely on renewable energy sources to power our Vermont campus.

The solar array project on which we break ground today takes us one large step closer to realizing this goal, as it is expected to provide nearly one-third of the energy needed to power our campus. This groundbreaking comes on the heels of the start-up of the largest anaerobic digester in the Northeastern United States at the Goodrich Farm in nearby Salisbury, another local project and partnership that is supplying renewable natural gas to the College and community.

Each of these efforts—indeed, all of our efforts to meet our Energy 2028 goals—are collaborative by design, because we all have a stake in the outcome. Just as our plan was crafted in a spirit of independence, in which no individual part could work without the other, the same can be said for our partnerships. Remove any one of us, and we're not here today. Remove any one of us, and we're not here today.

In a few weeks, on a platform a little bit bigger than this one and with just a few more people in attendance, the United Nations Climate Change Conference will convene in Glasgow, Scotland. The comparisons in scope between that and this, here and there, may cause some to peer at us today and wonder: what's the point? We're so small!

As I have written and spoken in the past, a local initiative such as this one is exactly the point, the point being that local wisdom and local practices are the ideal conditions to help put out the fire that is consuming our planet. The sun is one of the oldest symbols known to humans; it is in the earliest cave paintings tens of thousands of years ago, and in the earliest spoken prayers of more than 3000 years ago. It is only fitting that we should return, indeed come full circle, to the sun to heal our planet.

We are so blessed to call this place home.

The Green Mountains rest behind me.

In my mind's eye, I can already envision the sheep that will graze beneath the solar arrays, managing the vegetation growing in these fields.

And up above, in a sky that Sabra Field herself could have painted, a golden light will not only illuminate the beauty of our surroundings but will allow us to take another critical step toward building a sustainable future.

Thank you, everyone of you, for your help in building a new world.

LAURIE L. PATTON,  
President, Middlebury.

#### TRIBUTE TO ADELINE DRUART

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, these days, it is not uncommon for people to frequently change careers, companies, or job paths. At one iconic Vermont entity, though, Vermont Creamery, president and chief executive officer Adeline Druart has dedicated more than 17 years to growing and expanding the company's product line and brand. She was recently featured on the Positive Enterprise Podcast, and hers is a story in which all Vermonters can find pride and motivation.

The cheese and butter that Vermont Creamery produces is some of the best in the world. As a Certified B Corporation, Vermont Creamery follows a long Vermont legacy of investing in environmental sustainability, local supply chains, and worker satisfaction. These investments have clearly paid off. In 2017, Vermont Creamery was acquired by Land O'Lakes, a century-old farmer-owned cooperative, and has continued on an impressive path of conscious growth. With Land O'Lakes' support, Vermont Creamery has expanded its facilities nearly 40 percent and is now a recognizable brand in grocery stores across the country. In 2020, the company supported our community through the pandemic, donating 12,000 pounds of food to hungry Vermonters, providing hazard pay to their employees, and advocating for universal childcare for Vermont's working families. They also converted their Websterville-based facility to run on 100-percent renewable energy. And these changes have only underlined their belief that consciously crafted products made with the best ingredients just taste better. Today, the beloved Vermont Creamery makes the No. 1 best-selling goat cheese in the country.

Adeline Druart is responsible for so much of this impressive growth. In the early 2000s, Adeline, then a student from France, came to Vermont Creamery to complete an internship for her master's degree. She just couldn't stay away. Adeline worked her way up the ranks at the creamery, before being named president and CEO in 2015. In that role, she has shown exactly what tenacity and hard work, when paired with a people-first approach to business, can do. The mother of two young sons, Adeline has reinforced Vermont Creamery's original family-oriented

culture while steering the company's growth. She is an inspiration to me, and I am so proud that she calls Vermont home.

Vermont is home to some of the finest agriculture, wood-based, and other products in the country. We feature many of these at the annual Taste of Vermont here in Washington, a tradition I hope to return to next year. At the helm of so many of these Vermont companies are people like Adeline. It is in these hard-working and creative leaders that we can find great hope for Vermont's economic recovery and vibrant future.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### TRIBUTE TO STEVE LEVESQUE

• Mr. KING. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the outstanding career of a leader in economic development in the State of Maine. Steve Levesque, of Greenville, ME, is retiring after 41 years of professional experience in the areas of economic and community progress, land use planning, and environmental services in both the private and public sectors, including when I was Governor as commissioner of Maine's Department of Economic and Community Development. Most recently, Steve has made an indelible mark in his position as executive director of Midcoast Regional Redevelopment Authority, MRRA. From his first days in economic and community development in Maine, Steve has held a number of leadership positions in which he has led and advocated tirelessly for local, regional, and State economies with consistent messages of the quality of the business environment in Maine alongside our quality of life as Mainers.

In 2005, there were indications that the Naval Air Station Brunswick, NASB, would be disestablished and Steve, at that time, led the Brunswick Local Redevelopment Authority, charged with overseeing the successful completion of the Reuse Master Plan for NASB. He has been MRRA's only executive director since its formation in 2008. In 2011, when NASB officially closed, there were persistent doomsday forecasts about the hole that was left behind. Steve brought his own brand of fervency to MRRA to realize a dream of the adaptive reuse of the former base, now known as Brunswick Landing. He started by assembling a passionate and hard-working team and began carefully cultivating what would become critical and dedicated partnerships, developed over the years with so many groups: the Navy, the towns of Brunswick and Topsham, the State of Maine, all of Maine's congressional delegation, the FAA, and especially the impressive list of businesses and private developers who have invested in the vision to convert a former Navy base into an economic engine that